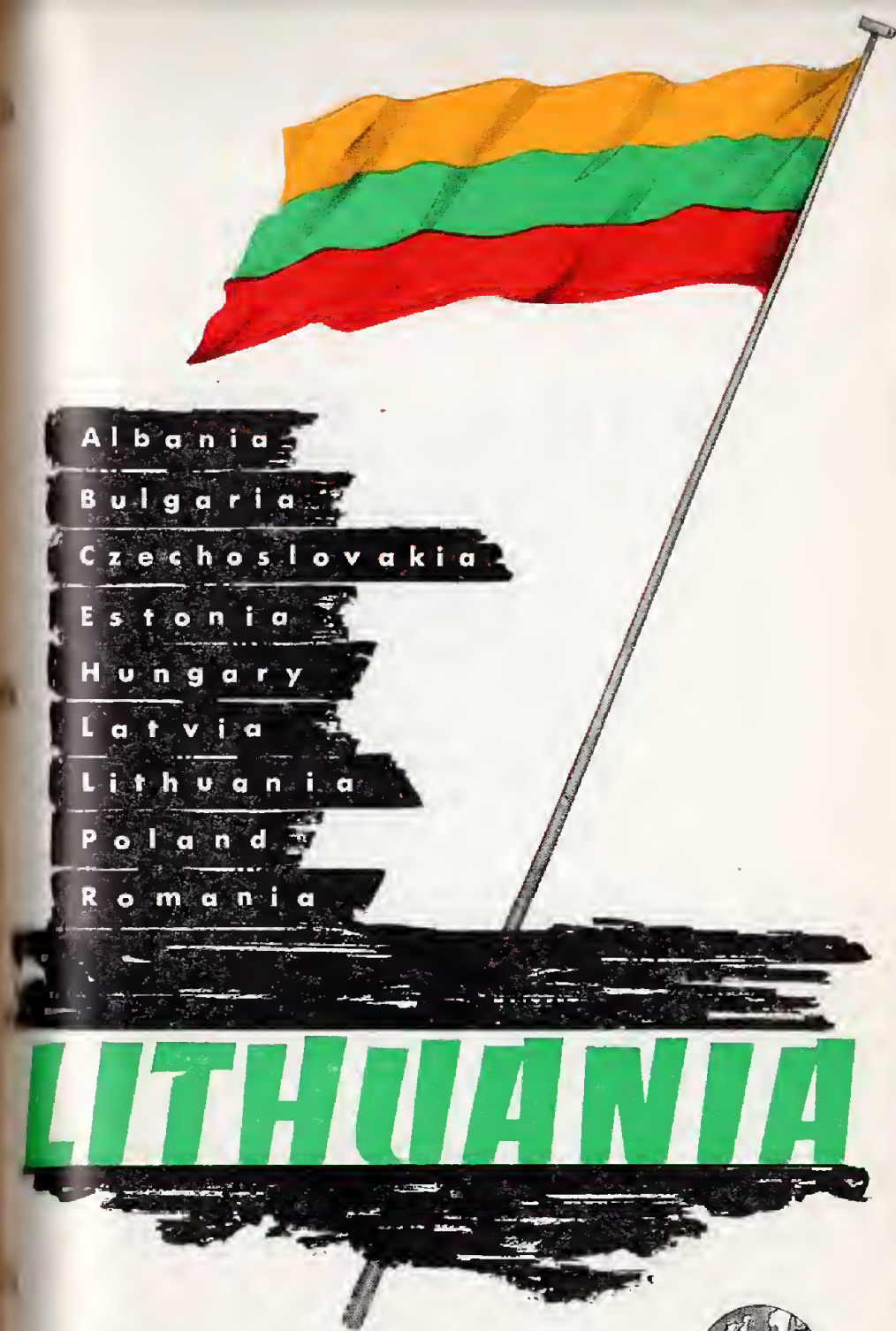


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LITHUANIA

ASSEMBLY OF CAPTIVE EUROPEAN NATIONS



LITHUANIA

by

Vytautas Vaitiekunas

Prepared by

The Committee for a Free Lithuania

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This is volume 5 in a series of nine booklets. The Assembly of Captive European Nations undertook the publication of the series in response to numerous demands. Also, since much of the existing literature on East-Central Europe has been written from the outsider's point of view, there seems to be a need for informative material bearing the stamp of authenticity and first hand experience. Each booklet has been prepared by experts of the respective National Committee.

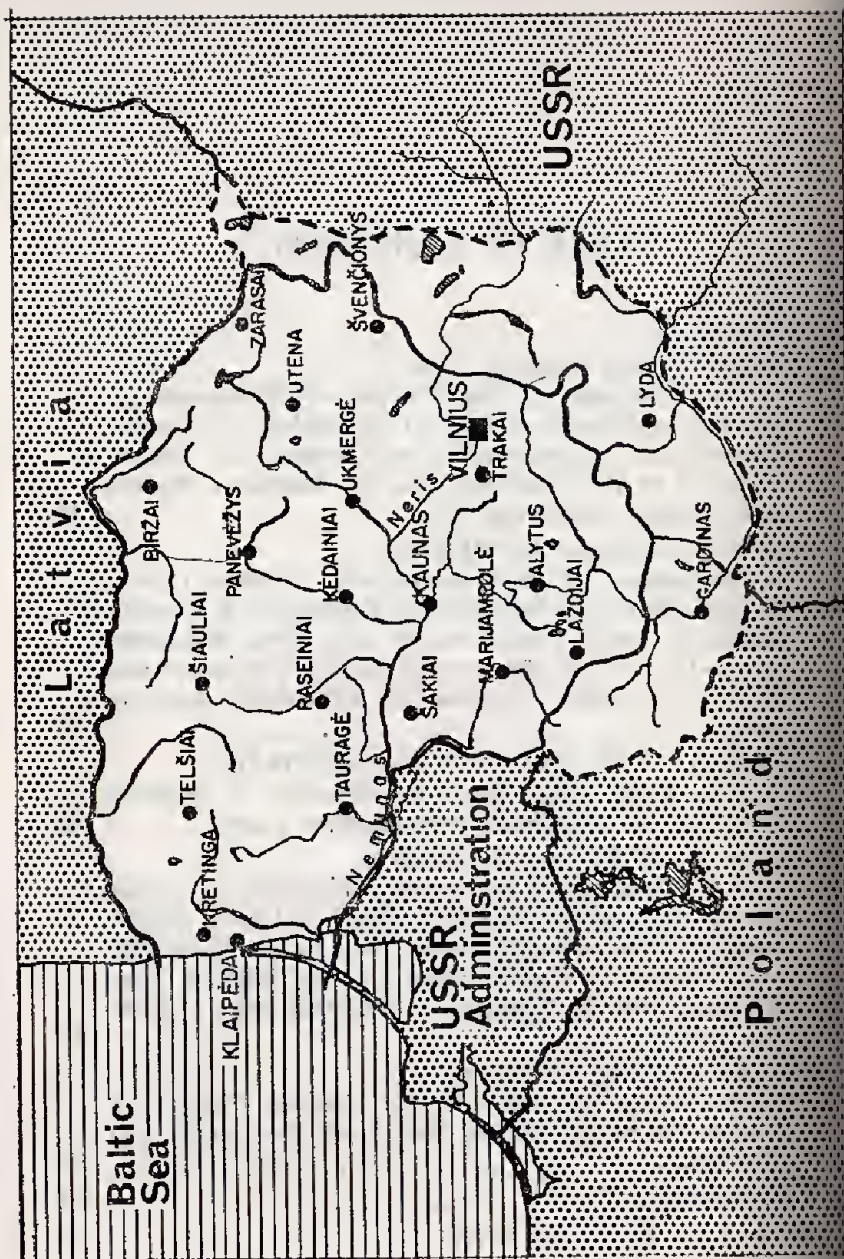
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I GEOGRAPHY

AREA. LITHUANIA is situated between 53° 54' and 56° 27' north latitude and 20° 56' and 26° 51' east longitude. It covers 25,167 square miles (65,200 square kilometers) and is somewhat larger than Switzerland, Belgium, or Denmark. It is bounded by Latvia on the north, by Byelorussia on the east, by Poland on the south, and by the so-called „Kaliningrad Region“ (prewar East Prussia) on the west. Lithuania's Baltic coastline extends for 61 miles.

CLIMATE. Lithuania lies along the boundary between the continental and maritime climatic zones. The annual mean temperature is 43° Fahrenheit, or about that of southern Sweden, Denmark, or northern Japan. The January climate in Lithuania is similar to Oslo's, while the hottest month, July, resembles that of England. The moist winds from the Atlantic sweep over Lithuania, bringing rain and thunderstorms in summer, rain and snow in the winter. Average rainfall ranges between 20 and 40 inches.

HYDROGRAPHY. Lithuania is located in the drainage basin of the Baltic Sea. The most important river is the *Nemunas* (582 miles). The basin area of the *Nemunas* and its tributaries covers most of Lithuania's territory. Other major rivers are the *Neris*, the *Nevežis*, the *Venta*, the *Dubysa*, and the *Šešupe*.

A project to build a power plant on the *Nemunas* was initiated during the period of Lithuania's independence; it was completed, only in 1959. The capacity of this plant is 40,000 kwh.

Lithuania is dotted with some 3,000 lakes of more than two acres in size. The largest is *Drūkšiai* (11,050 acres), the longest, *Dubingiai* (18 miles), and the deepest, *Tauragnas* (197 feet). Many lakes are interconnected, and a kayak can travel hundreds of miles without making an overland portage.

TOPOGRAPHY. The topography of Lithuania is almost exclusively glacial. Lithuania is a flat country, and none of its hills rises to more than 1,050 feet above sea level.

Typical of the Lithuanian landscape are the many castle-hills and grave-mounds. They were built by ancient Lithuanians for defense purposes or as memorials for great leaders and warriors. The most famous of these castle-hills is *Pimia* on the bank of the Nemunas river, where the castle of Duke Margeris stood more than six centuries ago. The story of *Pimia* castle-hill has been summarized by a German chronicler in words which reveal much of the Lithuanian spirit and show the imprint of history upon the Lithuanian landscape:

There came in 1336 a large number of crusading German princes and nobles to Prussia for whom the Grand Master was anxious to arrange a "hunting party" into Lithuania. German troops besieged the Lithuanian castle Pilene, where about 4,000 Lithuanians with their wives and children had taken refuge. As all attempts to take the castle, defended by a Lithuanian chief called Margers, proved futile, the Germans set fire to the castle by kindling its wooden walls. The Lithuanians, unable to hold the burning castle any longer and refusing the humiliation of being at the mercy of the brutal enemy, killed their own wives and children and then put themselves to the sword. When the Germans renewed the attack upon the defenseless castle and ascertained what had happened, the strong German army was so much struck with horror by the greatness of the pagan mind that it did not venture to proceed further and, with many casualties and without booty, returned in low spirits to Prussia.

The *Užmaris* (Kurland Spit) in Western Lithuania is the land of the highest sand dunes in Europe. There some dunes reach a height of 230 feet. They constantly change their shapes in the wind. If one visits the dunes on two consecutive days in dry windy weather, one will not recognize the landscape—valleys lie where hills stood before and hills rise where there were formerly declivities.

FORESTS. Lithuanian forests cover an area of 3,852,500 acres, or 23.87 per cent of the country's present territory. About 61 per cent of the forest area is covered with conifers. Spruce, fir, and pine forests are scattered amidst oak, aspen, and birch. There are also islands of hornbeam. The tallest fir tree, 138 feet, grows in the *Pimia* forest. Lithuanian oak is of a very high quality, matched only by the oaks of Germany and Yugoslavia.

The oldest tree in Lithuania grows near the village of *Stelmuke*. The circumference of this giant oak-tree is 42.6 feet, and its diameter, 13.5 feet. Another famous Lithuanian oak, *Baublys*, inspired these lines in the epic poem *Pan Tadeusz* by the great Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz:

*And the Baublys oak? Within its hollow trunk,
In that great cave, they said, a dozen knights
Together came to hold their merry feasts.*

In 1961, however, only 5.1 per cent of the Lithuanian forest area was covered with full-grown trees; on 10.1 per cent grew trees nearing maturity; on 31.2 per cent, middle-aged trees; and on 53.6 per cent, saplings and seedlings.

In the Lithuanian forests can be found some 200 different varieties of mushrooms. Many kinds of berries are abundant.

WILDLIFE. Lithuanian wildlife, in general, resembles that of the rest of Central Europe. Moose are the largest of the wild animals. Hares, deer, foxes, badgers, wolves, and wild boars are the most common, but one can also encounter elk, roe-deer, wild goats, and martens. Canada minks, beavers, and muskrats have been introduced since World War II.

About 270 different birds spend the summer, or the whole year, in Lithuania. The lake *Žuvintas*, since 1937 a wildlife refuge, is a favorite nesting ground for migrating birds. Its dense growths and endless labyrinth of narrow streams made it an invaluable shelter for Lithuanian freedom fighters battling Soviet intruders in the wake of World War II.

BOUNDARIES. The boundaries of Lithuania proper are historically among the most stable borders in Europe. Lithuania's frontier with Latvia was stabilized in the 13th century and slightly altered in 1921 by mutual agreement. Lithuania's boundary with the Teutonic Knights, and later with the Kingdom of Prussia, did not change between 1422 and 1919. This boundary, however, was never an ethnographic frontier, since it cut through Lithuanian lands, separating Lithuania Minor (Prussian Lithuania) from Lithuania Major. At Versailles (1919) the Allies detached from Germany a small part of Lithuania Minor (1,088 square miles) to provide Lithuania with an outlet to the Baltic Sea, including the Klaipeda harbor. The Potsdam Line, traced by President Truman, and Stalin and Attlee in 1945, closely resembles the Caspar Hennenberger Line of 1595—then the southern limit of the Lithuanian language in Prussia. It was the Potsdam Line that separated Lithuania Minor and the vicinity of Königsberg from Germany and assigned the region to Soviet administration. Initially, the Kremlin intended to turn over the region to Lithuania, but in 1947 decided to convert it instead into a typical Russian colony. Members of the local population were expelled, exterminated, or deported to slave labor camps in Russia; some 500,000 Russian colonists were settled in their place. Lithuanian and German place names were Russianized overnight.

Lithuania's boundary with the Soviet Union was established in 1920, by the Peace Treaty of Moscow, on the basis of ethnographic, religious, and cultural factors. Because of Lithuania's unsettled territorial conflict with Poland, however, that boundary remained a theoretical one. When the Soviet Union occupied eastern Poland in 1939, including the region of Vilnius, it returned to Lithuania only about one third of the territory ceded to Lithuania by the Peace Treaty of 1920.

POPULATION. According to the Soviet census of January 15, 1959, Lithuania had a population of 2,711,000, of which as many as 211,000 were Soviet colonists. Yet before World War II, the autochthonous population in this same area was 3,200,000. Since the average annual birth rate of Lithuania's population has been 11 per 1,000, under normal conditions the population of Lithuania should have grown to at least 3,900,000 by 1959. The shocking decline in Lithuania's population between 1939 and 1959 is mainly the result of Soviet and Nazi genocide. Demographers in the West calculate Lithuania's population losses as follows:

First Soviet occupation, 1940-1941	60,000
German occupation, 1941-1944	250,000
Second Soviet occupation, 1944-	570,000
Expatriates and refugees	280,000
	<hr/>
	1,160,000

The population density in Lithuania declined from 122 (1939) to 106 (1959) per square mile.

The principal cities of Lithuania are:

Vilnius (264,000), capital city of Lithuania since 1323, and famous for its monuments of Baroque and Renaissance architecture. Throughout history it has been a cultural and religious shrine not only for Lithuanians, but for Poles and Jews as well. An important railway junction, it is also noted for its many industries.

Kaunas (247,000), founded in the 11th century. Temporary capital of Lithuania from 1921 to 1939, it is an important industrial and commercial center.

Klaipeda (105,000), Lithuania's only seaport, which dates back to the 13th century.

Šiauliai (68,000), a transport and commercial center,

RELIGION. The first census in independent Lithuania, in 1923, established the following religious distribution: Roman Catholic—85.7 per cent; Jews—7.7 per cent; Protestant—3.8 per cent; Greek

Orthodox—2.7 per cent. The present regime, bent on exterminating religion in Lithuania, does not publish data on the religious affiliations of the population.

LANGUAGE. The Lithuanian language differs as completely from the Slavonic or Germanic tongues as, for instance, English differs from Greek. Professor Benjamin B. Dwight wrote in his *Modern Philology*: „Lithuanian is a language of great value to the philologist. It is most antique in its forms of all living languages of the world, and most akin in its substance and spirit to the primeval Sanskrit." In the opinion of another noted linguist, Dr. Alfred Senn, the Lithuanian language, "despite its conservative character, is as modern as our modern world. You can express and discuss in the Lithuanian language anything that our civilization requires you to say." Lithuanian is now spoken as the mother tongue by some 4,000,000 people throughout the world.

II.

HISTORY UNTIL WORLD WAR I

1. Early Origins

THE LITHUANIANS belong to the same Indo-European group of peoples as those of most European nations. They are the survivors of a separate and distinct branch of the Aryan family, and are not members of the Slavonic or Germanic lineage. Of all the living European peoples, only the Latvians are related to them. The forefathers of both the Lithuanians and the Latvians—the so-called Balts—once populated the whole shore of the Baltic Sea and occupied the region from the Vistula River to far beyond the Daugava River.

Lithuanians lived on the Baltic shores long before the Christian era. The first recorded reference to them is contained in the book *Germania* by the Roman historian Tacitus, in the 2nd century A.D. A clearer picture of Lithuania, however, emerged in the 9th and 10th centuries. The name Lithuania first entered the annals of history in 1009, with a mention in the *Annales Quedlinburgenses*. The beginnings of written Lithuanian history are to be found in the early 13th century.

Isolated by the Baltic Sea, impenetrable forests, and the great Pripet marshlands, the ancient Lithuanians did not take part in the great migrations of nations. They were peaceful hunters and cultivators of the soil, who carried on friendly trade with visiting merchants.

The peaceful life of Lithuanians was first disturbed by the Slavs and Vikings. But the most dangerous neighbor emerged in the 13th century, when the Order of the Teutonic Knights, a monastic and military organization, launched its eastern drive. The professed aim of the Order was the conversion of heathens to Christianity. In response to the Christian slogans of the Teutonic Knights, the Popes proclaimed the crusades against the Lithuanians, under the

Order's banners. The reality behind the slogans was quite different: it was simply a design to enslave the Baltic peoples and to seize their lands. Although they claimed officially to be servants of the Church, the Knights did not even allow missionaries to enter Lithuania.

The scattered forces of Prussian* princes, enmeshed in local rivalries, were unable to halt the powerful military machine of the Order. In the course of 50 years the Order conquered the western Prussian principalities in the region now known as East Prussia. The Teutonic Knights then turned on Lithuania proper; a life-and-death struggle began that was to last 150 years.

2. The Kingdom of Mindaugas

The fate of their Prussian kinsmen—subjugation and extermination—threatened to engulf all the Lithuanian principalities. Lithuanians soon recognized the value of a single command over the many military formations of individual families, and a few princes gradually came to occupy dominant positions. Then, in 1236, Prince Mindaugas rose above all other ruling families as the sole leader of the new unified State. Thus was created a bulwark against the onslaught of the Teutonic Order.

Other important events were taking place during that time in Eastern Europe. In 1240 the Mongols seized Kiev and marched on Poland and Hungary. Russia was engulfed by the Mongol deluge. Taking advantage of the weakening of the Russian principalities, the Lithuanians began to expand eastward and southward. In 1241 they defeated the Tatars and temporarily stopped their drive toward the West.

In 1251 Prince Mindaugas was converted to Christianity. Pope Innocent IV, the highest spiritual authority of that time, issued an edict crowning Mindaugas as King of Lithuania. The coronation took place in 1253. When King Mindaugas and his sons were murdered by conspirators in 1263, however, Lithuania reverted to its ancient religion. A civil war for supreme power ensued.

3. Toward Greatness

The most important ruler to emerge after several pagan princes was King Gediminas (1316-1341). With him began three generations

* Prussians: *Prusi* or *Borussi*, a Baltic people, not to be confused with the German colonists of the conquered Prussian territory who adopted the name of the autochthonous inhabitants.

of rulers endowed with a degree of statesmanship rarely equalled in history. Gediminas, who titled himself *Rex Lituanorum et multorum Ruthenorum*, incorporated vast areas of the Ukraine and Byelorussia into Lithuania. At the same time he successfully resisted the Teutonic Order in the west. He was the first Lithuanian ruler to enter into an alliance with Poland. Pope John XXII held King Gediminas in great esteem.

After Gediminas, his sons Algirdas and Kestutis ruled Lithuania for 32 years (1345-1377). The brothers closely coordinated their actions. Algirdas exercised control over eastern affairs, while Kestutis supervised relations with the West and especially with the Teutonic Order. In 1362 Algirdas defeated a powerful Tatar army and thus saved the West from Tatar domination, which had already been imposed on Russia. The French historians Lavissee and Rambaud state in their *Histoire Générale* that it was of considerable importance in the history of European civilization that these Lithuanian princes were able to block the Tatar drive against Europe; that they protected the shores of the Black Sea against Asiatic invasions; and that they stopped the further advance of the Teutonic Order.

4. Peak of Expansion

Algirdas was succeeded by his son Jogaila, who was to become King of Poland. In 1387 the Lithuanians accepted Christianity—not from the hated Teutonic Knights, but from the Poles.

When he ascended the Polish throne, Jogaila remained Grand Duke of Lithuania. From this fact the danger arose that Lithuania would become an integral part of Poland. The opposition of the Lithuanian people to such an integration compelled Jogaila to hand the helm of the Lithuanian State to his cousin Vytautas (1392-1430), son of Kestutis.

It was during Vytautas' rule that the Teutonic Order received a mortal blow. Through his marriage with the Polish Queen Jadwiga of Anjou, in 1386, Grand Duke Jogaila won an ally against the Teutonic Order and established contact between Lithuania and Western Europe. As a result, less than 25 years later, the allied Lithuanian and Polish forces inflicted a crushing defeat on the Teutonic Knights in 1410, at Gruenwald (Zhalgiris). The Teutonic Order, which never recovered from this blow, was finally dissolved in 1525.

Under Vytautas, Lithuania's political importance reached its climax. The country's borders extended from the Baltic to the Black Sea, from the vicinity of Moscow to the Bug and Dniester rivers. Vytautas is the most outstanding personality in Lithuania's history and alone

among its rulers has earned the surname "the Great." A man of vision and wisdom, industrialist, builder of roads, promoter of commerce, and protector of racial and religious tolerance, Vytautas the Great elevated his nation to first rank among the European powers of his time.

5. Russian Menace and Commonwealth with Poland

The 15th century saw a sudden growth of Russia's power. That nation expanded rapidly and began to lay claim to principalities under Lithuania's sovereignty. The struggle for these territories went on during almost the entire 16th century.

The growing threat of Moscow led to the establishment of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569. A common king was to be elected by the nobility of both nations, which pledged to maintain a common foreign policy. In every other respect the two nations were to remain separate and sovereign political entities. In entering the Commonwealth, Lithuania ceded to Poland the Ukrainian provinces and limited its territory to the ethnically Lithuanian and Byelorussian lands.

Yet even the establishment of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth did not halt Moscow's expansionism. As Zygmunt-August, King of the Commonwealth, wrote in his letter to Queen Elizabeth I of England: "As Moscow's power grows, the greater the danger not only to us but to all Christianity."*

6. Decline and Fall of the Commonwealth

Moscow's expansionism was not the only cause of the decline of the Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth. The wars with Sweden, as well as internal strife, weakened the Commonwealth to such a degree that in the 18th century it was partitioned between Russia, Prussia, and Austria (1772-1795). The greater part of Lithuania was taken by Russia.

7. Russian Rule and the National Awakening

Lithuania's subjection to Russia lasted 120 years, from 1795 to 1915, when the German armies occupied the country. Yet Lithuanians never lost hope of regaining their independence. When in 1812 Napoleon passed through Lithuania on his way to Russia, nine regiments of Lithuanian volunteers joined him to fight against

* Since the period of Tsar Ivan III (1440-1505), Russia has fought 86 aggressive wars (12 under the Soviets) and perpetrated 89 annexations of territories (20 of them by the Soviets).

Moscow. With the defeat of Napoleon, however, Russia's grip grew even tighter. Open rebellions erupted again in 1831 and 1863—both were ruthlessly put down. In 1832 the University of Vilnius was closed, and in 1840 the Lithuanian Statute was abolished and replaced by Russian law. More oppressive measures followed: the Lithuanian language was banned in the schools; Russian officials swarmed into the country; a special decree even forbade the name of "Lithuania," replacing it with the Russian term, "North-West Province." In 1864 the Russian government outlawed the printing of Lithuanian books and newspapers in Latin characters.

Some of the harshest tsarist measures were directed against the Roman Catholic Church. Bishops were forbidden to appoint or transfer priests without governmental permission; priests needed police permits to travel beyond the boundaries of their parishes; the choice of sermons was restricted to government-approved collections only. To enter a seminary for priests, a young man had to obtain a permit from the Russian authorities. Many Roman Catholic churches were transferred outright to the Russian Orthodox religious communities. An attempt by the Lithuanian faithful in Kražiai to prevent such a transfer by holding an uninterrupted vigil of prayers in the church, has led to the notorious Massacre of Kražiai, which reverberated through all Europe.

But the Lithuanians did not surrender. The national awakening was heralded by the publication of the newspaper *Aušra* ("The Dawn") in 1883, in East Prussia, immediately beyond the border of Russian-occupied Lithuania. Despite all their efforts, the Russians were unable to stop the widespread smuggling of Lithuanian literature printed abroad into the country. Lithuania's hopes of regaining freedom were kindled during the Russo-Japanese war, when a revolutionary movement enveloped Russia itself. The Grand National Congress, which met in Vilnius on December 4-6, 1905, summed up the Lithuanian demands: Home Rule for ethnic Lithuania, with a parliament to be elected by universal ballot.

In the wake of the 1905 revolution, Russia regained full control in Lithuania; yet it was compelled to grant some concessions to the Lithuanian people. The ban on the Latin alphabet was revoked; publication of books and newspapers, although under censorship, was permitted; private Lithuanian schools and organizations were allowed to operate under police surveillance. The Roman Catholic Church gained some liberty of action. The struggle for freedom in Lithuania received the full-fledged support of Lithuanians who had emigrated to the United States. Organized into some 2,000 societies and over 100 Roman Catholic parishes, they collected funds and sought to influence public opinion to help their native land liberate itself from foreign domination.

III.

THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

1. Restoration of Independence

WORLD WAR I provided the Lithuanians with a long-awaited unity to press their demands for the restoration of national independence. Committees organized for this purpose brought the case of Lithuania before the forum of world opinion by issuing special publications in the major Western languages.

In September, 1917, 214 Lithuanian representatives gathered in Vilnius and elected a Lithuanian National Council of 20 prominent leaders representing all political trends. On February 16, 1918, the National Council unanimously proclaimed the restoration of Lithuania's independence. The reply of the German authorities was the immediate confiscation of this Declaration of Independence. But the Kaiser's Germany and tsarist Russia soon fell apart under the blows of the War and in the turmoil of internal revolutions. On November 11, 1918, the National Council formed the first cabinet of the Independent Republic of Lithuania.

The provisional government of Lithuania called volunteers to arms to defend the country's independence. The Germans were slowly retreating from Russia. The Red Army was following on their heels toward Lithuania, together with a Moscow-created "Lithuanian Soviet Government" under the leadership of Vincas Kapsukas-Mickevicius, head of the Lithuanian office of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow.

On December 22, 1918, Soviet Russia recognized Kapsukas' puppet regime and tried to intervene in support of a so-called genuine government. But in reality no revolutionary movement existed in Lithuania, as was openly admitted by the deputy chairman of the Kapsukas' government, Angarietis:

"The Soviet rule in Lithuania was not won through an internal struggle, nor was it the result of a workers' revolt...; it was the Red Army that brought Soviet rule to Lithuania."

In May, 1919, the Lithuanian National Army launched a general offensive against the Soviet Russian invaders. By August, 1919, not a single Russian soldier remained on Lithuanian soil. A peace treaty between Lithuania and Soviet Russia was signed on July 12, 1920, in Moscow. According to this treaty the Soviet Russia recognized Lithuania as a sovereign and independent State and renounced all claims to Lithuanian territory. Article 1 of the treaty reads:

In conformity with the right, declared by the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, of all peoples to free self-determination, including the right of a full secession from the state of which they have been a part, Russia recognizes without any reserve the sovereignty and independence of the State of Lithuania, with all juridical consequences resulting from such recognition, and voluntarily and forever renounces all sovereign rights possessed by Russia over the Lithuanian people and territory. The fact that Lithuania was ever under Russian sovereignty does not place the Lithuanian people and their territory under any obligation to Russia.

But the struggle for independence was not yet over. In the summer of 1919, remnants of the German army under General von der Goltz and Russian monarchist formations under Bermond-Avaloff invaded northern Lithuania. The invaders were defeated on November 21-23, 1919, and were permitted to retreat to East Prussia.

A more difficult problem, however, arose from the south. On October 7, 1920, under the auspices of the League of Nations, Lithuania and Poland signed an armistice agreement, demarcating the border between the two countries. But two days later, two Polish divisions under General Żeligowski crossed the armistice line and invaded the region of Vilnius. In a fierce six-week struggle, the Lithuanian army checked the advance of the Polish divisions some 25 miles northwest of Vilnius. A special commission of the League of Nations then imposed an armistice and a neutral zone. Lithuania lost its capital, Vilnius, and almost one third of its territory. In protest, Lithuania severed relations with its southern neighbor. For 18 years (1920-1938) no mail or trains crossed the border between Lithuania and Poland; no diplomatic or consular representatives were exchanged.

Another change of Lithuania's borders came in 1923. The Lithuanian population of the Klaipeda (Memel) territory rebelled against the temporary French administration and, with the help of volunteers from the mainland, achieved the desired union with Lithuania.

2. Political Life

The great powers extended *de jure* recognition to Lithuania during 1918-1922. In 1921 Lithuania was admitted to the League of Nations. In 1920, the Lithuanian Constituent Assembly was elected. A permanent democratic constitution was adopted on August 1, 1922. It provided for freedom of speech, of the press, and of assembly; full equality for all religious and ethnic minority groups; direct and proportional elections of representatives to parliament; and election of the President of the Republic for a three-year term by the parliament.

The period of parliamentary democracy in Lithuania came to an end with a *coup d'état* by Lithuanian army officers in 1926. Antanas Smetona was elected President and inaugurated a period of semi-authoritarian rule. Opposition had little, if any, opportunity for expression. All political parties, with the exception of Smetona's own small Nationalist party, were banned. Yet Smetona, a former professor of Greek philosophy and a humanistic conservative, did not have the making of a genuine totalitarian dictator. Although the opposition press was censored, it was not abolished. Cultural, professional, and economic organizations functioned under close police surveillance, but were not forbidden. Also, Smetona was held in great esteem by the Orthodox Jewry and by a sizeable part of the Polish minority.

When Hitler, using the threat of force, seized Klaipeda (Memel) in 1939, Lithuania lost much of its economic independence and some 25 per cent of its industries. The shock to the government and the nation was so great that President Smetona asked a non-party man, General Jonas Černius, to form a new cabinet. Members of the Christian Democrat and Peasant Populist opposition were included in the new cabinet—a step toward the restoration of democracy.

3. Agriculture

Before World War I, about 450 families in Lithuania owned 3,500,000 acres, or 22 per cent of the country's land. A sweeping land reform law in 1922 created more than 45,000 new farms by 1939. Before the Soviet Russian invasion of 1940, Lithuania had 287,000 farms, and 70 per cent of the country's population was engaged in agriculture.

Scientific methods were introduced into farming, and industries closely related to agriculture were established. The Center of Agricultural Research in Dotnuva developed new varieties of grain and fodder crops. During the 10-year period preceding World War II, grain production increased by almost 100 per cent. In 1938,

the grain yield was 1,800,000 tons. Imported pedigree stock from Holland and Denmark considerably increased the milk yield. Butter production rose from 7,600 metric tons in 1928 to 19,900 tons in 1939. Butter export increased from 2,051 tons in 1927 to 17,413 in 1938. The number of cattle rose from 604,000 in 1920 to 1,239,890 in 1939.

As for independent Lithuania's achievements in pork and bacon production, Soviet propaganda itself has acknowledged that "at one time Lithuanian bacon became a kind of a national dish in Great Britain—so much of it was sold on the British market." By 1938, pork livestock in Lithuania numbered 1,249,470.

4. Industry

In 1913, Lithuania had only 151 industrial establishments, with 6,600 employees. During the independence period, the former increased more than ninefold, and the latter, more than fivefold. By 1934 Lithuania had managed to restore its prewar production, disrupted by the impact of the war. From that time on, industry grew by leaps and bounds. By 1939, the number of industrial enterprises had grown to 16,131 and total production reached the value of 405,800,000 *litas* (5.99 *litas* equalled \$1.00).

Among the many new enterprises launched for the first time in Lithuania were three modern sugar refineries, which fully supplied the local market. The factories of the great meat-packing combine *Maistas* were pronounced by foreign experts to be among the most modern and the best planned and equipped in Europe. The Central Union of Dairy Cooperative Societies, *Pienocentras*, included 91,000 members, 176 dairies and 159 skimming stations. Textile and metallurgic and machine building industries came after the dominant food processing industry in importance. Lumber, wood processing, paper and building material industries were also highly developed.

Production Values in 1939		(in <i>litas</i>)
Food processing	—	above 200,000,000
Textile manufacture	—	40,000,000
Metallurgy and machinery building	—	24,000,000

The total production value was 405,749,000 *litas*.

The Great Depression had no appreciable effect on Lithuania's industrial growth. While in 1931 world production declined to 74.8 per cent of that of 1929, Lithuania's industry expanded by 140.7 per cent. By 1939, unimpaired by the depression, Lithuania's industry had exceeded the 1929 level by 354.2 per cent.

5. Transport

The Lithuanian Republic inherited from the Russian Empire 600 miles of neglected standard-gauge railroads track and 466 miles of wholly inadequate narrow-gauge track. Rolling stock virtually did not exist. By 1937, Lithuania had built up 1,041 miles of standard-gauge and 372 miles of narrow-gauge track. The country's rolling stock consisted of 192 locomotives, 438 passenger cars, and 4,323 freight cars.

First-class highways covered 1,242 miles in 1938, while good quality local roads stretched for 18,693 miles. In that year a 10-year highway construction program was in progress.

6. Foreign Trade

	Exports	Imports
	(in <i>litas</i>)	
1923	146,800,000	156,600,000
1930	337,700,000	312,400,000
1939	209,194,000	169,362,000*

In 1939, food products amounted to 53.04 per cent, and raw materials and semi-manufactured goods to 29.8 per cent of total exports. Over 66 per cent of Lithuanian exports went to Great Britain and Germany, while over 53 per cent of its imports came from these countries. Other trade partners were Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Holland, Latvia, the Soviet Union, Switzerland, and the U.S. Lithuanian exports in 1938 amounted to \$13.30, and imports to \$11.00 *per capita*.

7. Social Conditions

From its very inception, the Republic of Lithuania showed a great concern for the social welfare of its people. The end of World War I found the Lithuanian workers, especially laborers on the large estates, in miserable working conditions. Between 1919 and 1924 eight laws were enacted to establish the length of the working day, minimum wages, and pensions, and to provide medical care on all farms of more than 200 acres.

The rights of industrial workers and those engaged in trades and crafts were firmly protected by a new law promulgated in 1933.

* World War II severed Lithuania's foreign trade relations with many of its trade partners.

The law prohibited the employment of children under 14 years of age. Minimum wages were regulated by a committee, composed of representatives of labor and management, and by a labor inspector. After one year of service a worker or employee was entitled to 10 days of paid vacation. If a worker or employee was discharged without serious grounds, the employer had to pay him a compensation of up to 14 weeks of his salary. An 8-hour working day, or a 48-hour week, was established.

Compulsory health insurance was introduced in 1927 for all wage-earners except farm workers. In case of illness, the insured worker, or a member of his family, was provided with medical, dental, and hospital care for a period of up to 26 weeks. In special cases the period of hospitalization was extended. The family of the hospitalized employee was entitled to one half of his wages. In the case of an insured employee's death, his family received special assistance. Maternity expenses up to 700 *litas* for two weeks of medical treatment during pregnancy, as well as six weeks of nursing, were provided for by the government.

Compulsory accident insurance for workers in industry, transportation, construction, communications, and forestry was introduced in 1936, and three years later extended to farm workers. If the insured person was injured while at work, he was entitled to free medical care and to two thirds of his salary until resumption of work. In the case of the injured person's death, the surviving spouse received one third of the salary of the deceased for life, or until he or she remarried. Children up to 15 years of age, who had one surviving parent, received one fifth of the annual wage of the deceased, and one half if they were orphans. Jobless workers received unemployment benefits from the municipality. A Public Works' Fund was maintained by contributions of employers, contractors, municipalities, and the government. A Labor Inspection Board arbitrated disputes between labor and management.

In 1927, the Central Bureau of Trade Unions included nine unions with 18,486 members. The Christian Trade Unions counted about 10,000 members. After the *coup d'état* of 1926, the activities of the trade unions were partially restricted. A Chamber of Labor was founded in 1935 to look after the cultural, economic, professional, and social needs of the wage-earners.

8. Education

The new Lithuanian Republic radically improved the nation's educational program. The progress in primary education during the period of independence can be seen from the following table:

Year	Schools	Teachers	Students
1918	875	1,022	51,221
1925	2,064	2,862	123,785
1930	2,396	3,741	177,536
1940	2,716	6,710	338,460 (including Vilnius)

Four years of compulsory primary school were introduced in 1922, and extended to six years in 1934.

Upon graduation from primary school, a young Lithuanian had a choice of a secondary school of general education or of a specialized secondary school. The first prepared him for the university, and the second for a profession which did not require higher education. The curriculum of the secondary schools of general education was quite comprehensive and included, among other subjects, three foreign languages, an introduction to philosophy, and advanced mathematics.

In 1920, there were 40 secondary (high) schools in Lithuania, with 9,076 students. By 1927, their number had risen to 100, with 29,939 students. Of the 100 Lithuanian secondary schools in 1927, 45 were private: 19 Jewish, 12 Lithuanian, 9 German, 3 Polish, 1 Latvian, and 1 Russian. The state provided partial support for all private schools.

At the end of World War I, Lithuania had no specialized junior high schools or secondary schools. In 1939, the first numbered 120, with 10,388 students, and the latter—23, with 3,702 students.

After the Russians closed the University of Vilnius in 1832, Lithuania was left without any institution of higher learning for 90 years. In 1922, the University of Kaunas was established. It had six faculties: Law, Liberal Arts, Medicine, Technology, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Catholic Theology. A faculty of Protestant Theology was added shortly afterwards. The largest attendance was in 1932—4,852 students. Seven other institutions of higher learning were founded: the Institute of Agriculture, the Institute of Commerce, the Academy of Arts, the Institute of Veterinary Science, the Teacher's College, the Conservatory of Music, and the Military Academy.

9. Literature

Historic adversity considerably delayed the development of individual writing in Lithuania. The first Lithuanian book, a catechism by Martynas Mažvydas, was published only in 1547, in Königsberg.

An abundant folklore literature, however, existed in Lithuania for many centuries before that date. It found its highest expression in the *dainos*, or folksongs. Their lyrical purity has impressed Goethe

and Victor Hugo. A contemporary American writer, Robert Payne, describes their impact as follows:

The *dainos* of Lithuania have a beauty and pure primitive splendor above anything I know in Western literature, with the exception of the early songs of the Greek islanders. They seem to have been written at the morning of the world, and the dew is still on them.*

The first major Lithuanian writer was Kristijonas Donelaitis (1714-1780), whose epic poem *Metai* (The Seasons) places him among the first genuine realists of European literature.

Beginning in the middle of the 19th century, a national awakening stirred Lithuanians under tsarist rule. Literature strove to serve burning national needs. The chief bard of the national awakening was Maironis (1862-1932), in whose work Lithuanian poetry reached a new standard of perfection. Žemaitė (1845-1921) and Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas (1869-1933) contributed important prose works in the realist tradition.

The greatest efflorescence of Lithuanian literature coincided with the period of full independence of the country. At the beginning of the 20th century, the poetry in one swift development underwent the transformations and absorbed and transmuted the influences which had taken centuries to evolve in the poetries of other countries. Outstanding poets of the independence period include: Jonas Aistis (b. 1904), Bernardas Brazdžionis (b. 1907), Faustas Kirša (1891-1964), Antanas Miškinis (b. 1905), Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas (b. 1893), and Salomėja Neris (1904-1945). The list of prose writers is headed by Petras Cvirka (1904-1946), Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius (1882-1954), Vincas Mykolaitis-Putinas, Jurgis Savickis (1890-1952), and Jieva Simonaitytė (b. 1897). In Lithuanian drama, two names tower above all others: Vincas Krėvė-Mickevičius and Balys Sruoga (1896-1946).

The impact of national freedom on Lithuania's cultural life can also be seen in the following statistics:

	Newspapers	Books published
World War I	3	259 (1919)
1925	117	471
1938	165	1,299

The total circulation of Lithuanian periodicals exceeded 1,000,000 copies in 1938. The number of libraries rose from a handful to 3,000. A Lithuanian Encyclopedia was begun in 1931; it is now being completed by writers and scholars living in exile.

* *The Green Linden: Selected Lithuanian Folks songs*. Voyages Press, 1964.

Upon the second occupation of Lithuania by the Soviets, 78 Lithuanian writers went into exile and only 32 remained in their homeland—an exodus unique in history.

10. Art

Lithuania has a long and rich tradition of folk art, especially in woodcutting and wood sculpture.

The great Lithuanian painter M. K. Čiurlionis (1875-1911) acted as a liberating force on the artists of independent Lithuania. Called by some art historians "the father of abstract painting," Čiurlionis received the following tribute from the famous French writer, Romain Rolland:

It is difficult to express in words the excitement this extraordinary artist awakens in me, as one who has not only enriched the art of painting, but who has also expanded our horizon in the sphere of polyphony and rhythmicity.

In the opinion of many art critics, the central figure of contemporary Lithuanian painting is Adomas Galdikas, who now lives in exile. His work has been described as "Lithuanian in his dionysiac pantheistic vigor and mystical lyricism."

Other well-known painters of the independence period were: A. Blatas (b. 1908), V. Didžiokas (1889-1942), Kalpokas (father—1880-1945) and (son—b. 1908), Sklėrius (1876-1932), A. Varnas (b. 1879), and J. Vienožinskis (1886-1960). The most important representatives of the graphic arts include M. Dobužinskis (1875-1958), T. Kulakuskas (b. 1907), and Vytautas K. Jonynas (b. 1907), of whom the last has achieved critical acclaim in the United States and Europe. Outstanding sculptors were A. Grybas (1890-1941), P. Rimša (1881-1961), and K. Zikaras. A new generation of Lithuanian artists have achieved international reputations in exile: Vytautas Kasiulis (b. 1918), painter; Antanas Mončys (b. 1921), sculptor; Romas Viesulas (b. 1918), engraver; and many others.

11. Theater and Music

Under tsarist rule, theatrical activity was almost non-existent in Lithuania. The first professional theaters in Vilnius and Kaunas were established only after the restoration of independence, in 1919. A year later, the first Lithuanian opera was premiered. In a short time, the Lithuanian theater achieved high professional standards, and its repertory vied in quality and variety with those of other countries of Europe.

The best-known composers in Lithuania have been Kazimieras Banaitis (1896-1964)—symphonic and chamber music; Juozas Gruodis (1884-1948)—orchestral suites, ballet music; Aleksandras Kačanauskas (1882-1961)—songs; Jeronimas Kačinskas (b. 1907), now living in exile—symphony; Jurgis Karnavičius (1884-1941)—symphony and opera; Antanas Račiūnas (b. 1905)—opera; and Stasys Šimkus (1887-1943)—choral music, opera.

12. Church and State

During the period of Russian rule in Lithuania the tsarist authorities showed open hostility to the Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths. Many restrictions were imposed, and for some years the building of new churches and synagogues, or the repair of old ones, was forbidden outright.

The discriminatory situation changed fundamentally after the restoration of Lithuania's independence. The status of the Roman Catholic Church was defined by a concordat between the Holy See and the Lithuanian government. The rights of the other Churches and religious organizations were buttressed by special laws. The clergy of all denominations were exempted from military service and received financial support from the state. All houses of worship were tax-exempt. Chaplains of various faiths worked in army units, hospitals, and prisons. Religious instruction in primary and secondary schools was carried out in accordance with programs devised by representatives of the respective denominations.

13. British Diplomat on Lithuania's Achievements

The progress made by independent Lithuania has been aptly summarized by E. J. Harrison, former British Vice-Consul in Lithuania:

During little more than two decades of independent life the resuscitated Lithuanian State made great progress in almost every sphere of constructive activity... Lithuania speedily emerged from the slough into which earlier Russian misrule had plunged her, and was already beginning to garner the fruits of enlightened policy in the cultural and economic spheres, when the second World War again involved her in universal catastrophe... The introduction of agrarian reform soon after the recovery of independence converted Lithuania from a country of great landowners into one of smallholders, hard-working farmers directly interested in the national well-being. The Government promoted the transition from grain culture to stock-

breeding and dairy farming, based upon large-scale co-operatives whose initiative and enterprise stimulated the expansion of foreign trade. Thus production was steadily increasing; a stable currency had been introduced and maintained with a central Emission Bank (the Bank of Lithuania); the State Budgets were uniformly balanced... Advances were also made in the sphere of social services, which were virtually non-existent under former Russian rule. Measures concerning the care of children, the sick, accidental injury, unemployment and destitution, national health and sanitation were rapidly developed. The progress of the country was such that the general standard of well-being steadily rose... The same progressive spirit and enthusiasm were manifested in the domain of culture.*

* *Lithuania's Fight for Freedom*. New York, 1952.

IV.

VICTIM OF THE NAZI-SOVIET CONSPIRACY

IN THE EAST, Lithuania's relations with the U.S.S.R. were based on the Peace Treaty of 1920 and the Non-Aggression Pact of 1926. In the west, boundaries between Lithuania and democratic Germany had been defined by the agreement of 1928. Mutually beneficial trade exchanges between the two countries were developing. But Hitler's rise to power interrupted this positive trend.

In March, 1939, Hitler, under threat of war, severed the region of Klaipeda from Lithuania. Shortly afterwards, through the secret agreements of August 23 and September 28, 1939, Hitler and Stalin joined in a conspiracy against Poland and the Baltic States. On September 17, 1939, the Red Army invaded Poland, and some days later reached the former Lithuanian-Polish administrative line.

On September 26, 1939, Molotov, then Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., called for reconsideration of Lithuanian-Soviet relations. The negotiations on October 2-10, 1939, in Moscow, were very difficult. The Lithuanian Government was faced with a dilemma: to accept the Soviet demands or to risk a military occupation. Meanwhile, the U.S.S.R. was concentrating its military forces on the Lithuanian frontier. The Lithuanian government, unable to withstand the immense pressure, was forced to sign the so-called "mutual assistance" pact, which was anything but mutual. In accordance with this pact, the U.S.S.R. established several military bases in Lithuania. The first six months passed without important incidents. But Moscow's seemingly correct attitude ended soon after the conclusion of the peace treaty between the U.S.S.R. and Finland on March 12, 1940. At the end of April the Lithuanian Minister in Moscow reported that "a black cat has crossed the road of Soviet-Lithuanian relations." On May 25, 1940, the Soviet government in a note accused the Lithuanian government of kidnapping Soviet soldiers. On May 30, 1940, the Soviet government published a press release "on provocations by the Lithuanian authorities." Subsequent efforts of the Lithuanian govern-

ment to satisfy the rulers of the Kremlin were doomed to failure, since the U.S.S.R. was already methodically implementing its secret agreements with Hitler as to the disposition of Lithuania.

On June 14, 1940, at 11:50 p.m. Molotov presented to the Lithuanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, at that time in Moscow, a Soviet ultimatum which concluded as follows:

The Soviet Union considers that the present situation cannot be continued. The Soviet Government considers it necessary and urgent:

1. That the Minister of the Interior, Skučas, and the Director of the Department of Security, Povilaitis, be immediately delivered to the judicial authorities and tried as directly guilty of acts of provocation committed against the garrisons of the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

2. That a Government be immediately formed in Lithuania capable of assuring and determined to ensure the proper fulfillment of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania and to suppress firmly the enemies of this Treaty.

3. That a free entry into the territory of Lithuania be immediately assured for units of the Army of the Soviet Union, which will be stationed in the most important centers of Lithuania and which will be sufficiently numerous to assure the enforcement of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and Lithuania and to put an end to acts of provocation directed against the garrisons of the Soviet Union in Lithuania.

The Soviet Government will wait for answer of the Lithuanian government until 10 a.m. on June 15. Failure to respond at the established time will be considered as a refusal to carry out the above-mentioned demands of the Soviet Union.

The President of the Republic, Antanas Smetona, called for the rejection of the Soviet ultimatum. The majority in his government, however, in order to prevent the destruction of the country, insisted on acceptance. On June 15, 1940, large military units of the Red Army poured into the country.

On the next day, Soviet Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs V. G. Dekanozov arrived in Lithuania and pieced together the so-called People's Government, which included some non-Communists who still believed that the U.S.S.R. would honor its promise to preserve Lithuanian independence. Contrary to their hope, however, the Kremlin's plan was the annexation of Lithuania, to be carried out by "Lithuanians themselves." This was the real task of the "People's Government."

The Kremlin ordered this puppet government to hold "elections" to the so-called People's Diet on July 14, 1940. On July 7, 1940, all non-Communist parties were banned. On July 11, 1940, over 2,000 prominent Lithuanian leaders in the political, cultural, and economic fields were arrested. The candidates to the "Diet" were selected by the Kremlin. With the Red Army everywhere, and the threats to non-voters in the air, the electorate had no choice but to "vote" for the Kremlin candidates.

Before the "election," neither the electoral platform nor any statement of the puppet government or of the Communist Party mentioned the incorporation of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R. Only after the "election" did the Communist Party launch a campaign which featured slogans demanding that the Stalin constitution be introduced into Lithuania and that Lithuania become a part of the Soviet Union.

On July 21, 1940, the "People's Diet" convened for its first session. At least 58 of its 79 members were Communists. The stage was set for the last act of the burial of Lithuania's independence. Instructions were clear and to the point. One hour and three minutes after the opening of the session, the "People's Diet" adopted the resolution which introduced the Soviet system into Lithuania and declared Lithuania a Soviet Republic. After a brief intermission—because the second resolution had not yet been translated from Russian into Lithuanian—the "People's Diet" gave its unanimous approval to the second resolution, which petitioned the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. that Lithuania be admitted into the Soviet Union. On August 3, 1940, the Supreme Soviet "generously accepted" the petition.

Thus the "People's Diet" fulfilled the role assigned to it by the Kremlin, but it did not in any way represent the will of the Lithuanian nation. Although the decisions of the "Diet" were carried out in the name of the Lithuanian people, the strong hand of the Kremlin pulled all the strings. As one of the members of the "Diet," Liudas Dovydėnas testified to the Select Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives to Investigate Communist Aggression:

After our election to the People's Diet, we were all informed that the incorporation of Lithuania into the Soviet Union had been settled and that the People's Diet should meet and approve it. The seventy nine deputies were seated in a theater among about a thousand people, these people were unknown to us. We weren't asked to vote for this, but the question was asked: "Who is against this resolution?" No one counted our vote. No one noticed whether we raised our hands or not, but the people in the theater began to yell, "Hurrah, hurrah!" And that is how the Assembly came to approve the admission of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R.

In its conclusion, the report of the Select Committee states:

Any claim by the U.S.S.R. that the elections conducted by them in July, 1940, were free and voluntary or that the resolution adopted by the resulting parliament petitioning for recognition as a Soviet Republic were legal—are false and without foundation in fact.

1. The World Says "No"

Attempts by the Soviets to disguise their aggression as a legal act have not deceived the world. From the very outset, the attitude of the United States has been one of absolute and uncompromising non-recognition of the Soviet annexation. It was spelled out on July 23, 1940, in a statement by the Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles:

During these past few days the devious processes whereunder the political independence and territorial integrity of the three Baltic Republics—Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania—were to be deliberately annihilated by one of their more powerful neighbors, have been rapidly drawing to their conclusion. From the day when the peoples of these Republics first gained their independence and democratic form of government, the people of the United States have watched their admirable progress in self-government with deep and sympathetic interest. The policy of this Government is universally known. The people of the United States are opposed to predatory activities, no matter whether they are carried on by the use of force or by the threat of force. They are likewise opposed to any form of intervention on the part of one State, however powerful, in the domestic concerns of any other sovereign State, however weak. These principles constitute the very foundations upon which the existing relationship between the twenty-one sovereign republics of the New World rest. The United States will continue to stand by these principles, because of the conviction of the American people that unless the doctrine in which these principles are inherent once again governs the relations between nations, the rule of reason, of justice, and of law—in other words, the basis of modern civilization itself—cannot be preserved.

An important consequence of the American refusal to recognize the illegal annexation of Lithuania is the continued full recognition of the legal continuity of the Lithuanian Republic and its diplomatic and consular representatives in the United States. This attitude of non-recognition has found a forceful expression in the American courts, which have constantly upheld the standing of the Lithuanian

consuls. The United States government considers as invalid any decisions of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. concerning Lithuania, or decrees issued by the Lithuanian puppet government.

Most European states—including France, Great Britain, Italy, and West Germany—and many states of South America follow the same pattern of non-recognition. As the British Minister of State, H. McNeil, stated on February 10, 1947, on behalf of the British government in the House of Commons: "Her Majesty's Government recognized that the Baltic States have *de facto* been absorbed into the Soviet Union, but have not recognized this *de jure*."

In its Report on the Situation in the Baltic States (August 23, 1960, Doc. 1173), the Council of Europe revealed that:

Moscow is trying to persuade the free world that the Lithuanian nation has joined the group of Soviet-enslaved peoples by its free volition and that the Lithuanian people have made appreciable economic and cultural progress under Soviet domination... In fact, however, Soviet propaganda has failed to produce any international legal act or contractual provisions in support of its contention. The statements made by the Soviet rulers are misleading and contradict the factual situation in Lithuania.

In 1962, Canada underscored its policy of non-recognition of Lithuania's occupation by granting full rights to the new Lithuanian Consul General of Toronto.

2. Interlude of National Freedom

When on June 22, 1941, Nazi Germany attacked the U.S.S.R., a spontaneous anti-Soviet revolt erupted throughout Lithuania. On June 23, 1941, the Kaunas radio station was occupied by the insurgents and a provisional Lithuanian government was formed. Units of the former Lithuanian Army, incorporated into the Soviet forces, revolted at Vilnius and Varena. The revolt was an unequivocal reply to the Soviet propaganda claims that Lithuanians had voluntarily renounced their national independence and joined the U.S.S.R.

Soviet propaganda has tried to label the 1941 national revolt as "made in Berlin." This allegation, however, is completely false. The revolt was a complete surprise to the Nazi government, which ordered the German military commander in occupied Lithuania not to enter into any relations with the provisional Lithuanian government and not help it in any way, but to restrict its activities as much as possible.

The provisional Lithuanian government quickly reestablished the administrative organs of the country. Yet it was an obstacle to the Nazi *Drang nach Osten*. On August 5, 1941, the provisional Lithuanian government was forced to discontinue its functions.

3. Lithuania's Fight against Nazis

Hitler's designs for Lithuania were formally announced immediately after the Nazi invasion of the U.S.S.R. By a decree made public on July 17, 1941, the territory of "Ostland" was created, encompassing Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Byelorussia. Thus Lithuania became a "province" of the Third Reich, a synthetic *Generalbezirk Litauen*.

The last semblance of self-administration in Lithuania was removed by the Nazi decree of August 18, 1941, which annulled the law issued by the provisional Lithuanian Government on the restitution of private property expropriated by the Soviets. This decree placed Lithuania in a situation identical with that during the Soviet occupation. The only change was in the color of the occupying power: from red to brown. The designs and policies of the Soviets and the Nazis were remarkably alike.

The Nazi *Gauleiters* in Lithuania brought orders from Berlin to exterminate the Lithuanian Jews and to mobilize large numbers of Lithuanians for the German war machinery. The Jewish people were subjected to methodic mass murder by the Nazis. Lithuanians, meanwhile, boycotted the registration centers for service in the German armed forces or for work in Germany's war industry. The Nazi administration avenged itself savagely: all Lithuanian universities were closed and many Lithuanian intellectuals were arrested and sent to the Stutthof "death camp"

The order of general mobilization or the formation of the *Bau-Battalione* (Construction Battalions) in Lithuania was an equally dismal failure. Manhunt raids by German gendarmes provoked armed Lithuanian resistance. Of the planned 100,000 Lithuanians for slave labor in the Third Reich, the Nazis managed to net only some 8,000.

The greater the failures of the Nazi administration, the harsher became the reprisals. Fifty per cent of the Lithuanian Teachers' Institutes were shut down; the number of secondary school classes was cut in half. The German language became an obligatory subject from the first grade of primary school. A term of the *Arbeitsdienst* (labor service) for the Third Reich was made a condition for secondary school students who had reached 15 years of age.

The general attitude of the Lithuanian people toward Nazi Germany and the U.S.S.R. was expressed in the editorials of the leading

underground newspapers and in the statements of the leaders of the resistance movement. This is one of their characteristic statements:

The Lithuanian people have never staked their destiny on the victory of either of the occupying Powers—German or Russian; they are not staking it now and will not do so in the future, since neither the victory of the one nor the defeat of the other would solve the problem of the freedom and independence of Lithuania. Lithuania is resolved at the right moment to throw in her forces with those of the rest of occupied Europe, in order to regain a free and independent life and to carry on her creative work for her people and for the peace and happiness of mankind.

Unfortunately, the Soviet Union emerged a victor from World War II, and Soviet occupation came in Lithuania for the second time in 1944. Lithuania was again labelled the "L.S.S.R."

V.

UNDER SOVIET COLONIAL RULE

THE HISTORY of modern colonialism since World War I has been one of the gradual extinction of the Western-type overseas colonialism and of the rapid expansion of Soviet overland colonial rule. During the Stalin era the Kremlin's colonialist designs were often revealed with cynical frankness by the emissaries of the late dictator. On July 2, 1940, for instance, Vyacheslav Molotov, then Commissar for Foreign Affairs, told the Lithuanian puppet Deputy Prime Minister:

You must take a good look at reality and understand that in the future small nations will have to disappear. Your Lithuania, along with other Baltic nations, including Finland, will have to join the glorious family of the Soviet Union. Therefore you should begin now to initiate your people into the Soviet system which in the future shall reign everywhere, throughout all Europe—put into practice earlier in some places, as in the Baltic States—later in others.

Moscow's rule in Lithuania, since the very first day of Soviet aggression, bears all the typical characteristics of classic colonialism: conquest by force, alien domination, political subjugation, and economic exploitation. In addition, Lithuania is subjected to a unique Soviet invention, cultural colonialism, which was defined during the United Nations debate on colonialism in 1960 as "the moral prostitution of an indigenous population... brought about by the raping of its intellect."

1. Alien Domination

The Soviet Union claims that its constituent republics, including Lithuania, are sovereign states: each has its own constitution as well as the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states, to

form its own military units, and to withdraw from the U.S.S.R. But these Soviet constitutional provisions exist merely on paper. To expose their hollowness it is enough to confront them with other Soviet constitutional provisions defining the jurisdiction of the Kremlin, which automatically cancels the jurisdiction of the individual republics. The jurisdiction of the Kremlin embraces:

- 1) Representation of the U.S.S.R. in international relations, conclusion and ratification of treaties with other States, establishment of the general procedure governing the relations of the Union Republics with foreign States;
- 2) Questions of war and peace;
- 3) Admission of new Republics into the U.S.S.R.;
- 4) Control over the observance of the Constitution of the U.S.S.R. and ensuring of the conformity of the Constitutions of the Union Republics with the Constitution of the U.S.S.R.;
- 5) Confirmation of the alteration of boundaries between the Union Republics;
- 6) Confirmation of the formation of new Territories and Regions and also of new Autonomous Republics and Autonomous Regions within Union Republics;
- 7) Organization of the defense of the U.S.S.R., direction of all the Armed Forces of the U.S.S.R., determination of principles governing the organization of the military formations of the Union Republics;
- 8) Foreign trade;
- 9) Safeguarding the security of the State;
- 10) Determination of the national economic plans of the U.S.S.R.;
- 11) Approval of the consolidated State budget of the U.S.S.R., determination of the taxes and revenues which go to the all-Union, the Republic, and the local budgets;
- 12) Administration of banks, industrial and agricultural institutions and enterprises, and trading enterprises of all-Union importance;
- 13) Administration of transport and communications;
- 14) Direction of the monetary and credit system;
- 15) State insurance;
- 16) Contracting and granting of loans;
- 17) Determination of the basic principles of land tenure, and of the use of mineral wealth, forests, and waters;
- 18) Determination of the basic principles in education and public health;
- 19) Organization of a uniform system of national economic statistics;
- 20) Determination of the principles of labor legislation;
- 21) Legislation concerning the judicial system and the judicial procedure, criminal and civil codes;

- 22) Legislation concerning Union citizenship, and the rights of foreigners;
- 23) Issuance of all-Union Acts of amnesty. (U.S.S.R. Constitution, Art. 14).

2. Communist Party — Supreme Holder of Power

The Communist Party, as a foreign agency, was not permitted to function in independent Lithuania. This ban was removed immediately after the Soviet invasion, on June 25, 1940, and the Communist Party became the main element in the nation's life.

The by-laws of the Communist Party, as well as the Soviet Constitution (Art. 126), define the Party as "the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to build a Communist society and a leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and governmental." The Soviet system thus considers the Communist Party as the supreme holder of state power. In occupied Lithuania, however, the local Party has always been a mere branch of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. The organizational structure of the Communist Party is based on the principle of so-called "democratic centralism," which means that the highest jurisdiction is vested in the Party's Central Committee or, more accurately, in the Party's First Secretary, whether Stalin, Khrushchev, or another. Consequently, the Communist Party of occupied Lithuania is incapable of even the slightest autonomous action.

Even in its subsidiary role, however, the Lithuanian Communist Party does not enjoy the Kremlin's trust, as evidenced, among others, by the percentage of Russians in the Party's Central Committee:

1952	1954	1956	1958	1960	1961	1964
33.3	20	26.2	21.7	22.7	28.4	32.5

Of the members of the Bureau of the Central Committee of Industrial Affairs, established in 1962, 33 per cent are Russians. In the Bureau of Agriculture, Russians make up 43 per cent of the membership. Of the delegates to the 14th Congress of the Lithuanian Communist Party, in 1964, 32.9 per cent were Russians; of Lithuania's "deputies" to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., 28.6 per cent were Russians.

3. Economic Exploitation

"With the introduction of the Soviet economic system," states the Report of the Council of Europe, "the Lithuanian people have been dispossessed of all private property—land, securities, real estate,

bank accounts, and business enterprises. The entire Lithuanian economy has been integrated into the Soviet system, making Lithuanian industry dependent on Soviet raw material sources and markets. Furthermore, 97 per cent of all farms have been collectivized, and a colonial system of near-slavery has reduced the standard of living to the Soviet level."

The exploitation has been most ruthless in Lithuanian agriculture. Since August 3, 1940, all land in Lithuania became the property of the Soviet state. Abolition of private property of land and coercive collectivization have reduced Lithuania's agricultural productivity and transformed Lithuanian farmers into destitute kolkhoz laborers.

Agricultural Output (in tons)			
	Grain	Wheat	Territory
1939	1,700,000	256,780	20,400 sq. m.
1961	800,000	99,000	25,167 sq. m.

In 1964 there were 1,865 kolkhozes and 232 sovkhoses in Lithuania. Their low productivity is apparent if one compares their share in total production of 1962 with that of the "family gardening plots" of the kolkhoz members, not larger than 1.5 acres:

	Kolkhozes & sovkhoses	Private plots of kolkhoz members
Land used	92 per cent	6 per cent
Milk output	39.6 per cent	60.4 per cent
Meat output	41.8 per cent	58.2 per cent

While agricultural production has declined in occupied Lithuania, industrial production has been considerably increased. Soviet data indicate that certain industries have augmented their output in 1962, in comparison with 1940, as follows:

Paper	— almost	7 times
Linen and cotton textiles	—	7 times
Silk textiles	—	10 times
Bricks	— more than	10 times
Leather footwear	—	16 times
Tricot underwear	—	22 times
Electric power	—	24 times

Yet the Communist regime in Lithuania admitted that in 1962, "the demand of the population for clothing articles, cotton and wool textiles, knitted underwear, furniture, footwear, and some other commodities is not fully satisfied." The explanation for this paradoxical situation is quite simple: economic colonialism. Instead of satisfying the requirements of the Lithuanian people, Lithuanian

industries are serving the economic needs and foreign trade interests of the colonial ruler—Russia.

The Kremlin favors the expansion of some industries in occupied Lithuania for various reasons: strategic advantages of decentralized Soviet industry, convenient transport facilities, the skill of Lithuanian workers. Also, the expansion of Lithuanian industry enables the Kremlin to promote its Russification drive through the import of large numbers of Russian "colons" as industrial experts. Most of the production of the nation's industries, however, is siphoned from Lithuania for the benefit of Soviet Russia. Lithuanian products are priced very low inside the U.S.S.R. And profits of sales of Lithuanian products to foreign countries, mainly the East-Central European satellites, go into government pockets in Moscow, which directs and supervises the foreign trade of the U.S.S.R.

As a result of colonial exploitation, the living standard of the Lithuanian population has sharply declined. The only exception is the privileged New Class, which consists mostly of Russian colonists. Of the rural inhabitants, 90 per cent, i.e. 54 per cent of Lithuania's population, have been transformed into underpaid serfs. To purchase a man's suit, for instance, a kolkhoz laborer and his wife must pool two years' wages. Industrial workers are not much better off, as the following comparison shows:

Purchasing Power of the Lithuanian Worker			
	Men's suits	Butter	Ground Beef
1939 (on an average monthly income)	2	130 lbs	430 lbs
1962 (on a high monthly income)	0.5	70.5 lbs	148 lbs

To accelerate the Russification of the subjugated countries the new program of the U.S.S.R. Communist Party, adopted in 1961, demands a "continuous exchange of trained personnel among nations." As a result, Russians and other Soviet nationals are pouring into Lithuania, while Lithuanian specialists are sent to remote areas of the U.S.S.R. Large numbers of Russian students are imported to Lithuanian vocational schools and universities; upon graduation they settle in Lithuania as privileged citizens.

4. Alignment of Lithuanian Education with Soviet Standards

The educational system of Soviet-occupied Lithuania is today controlled by the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. The student's parents have no voice about the contents, aims, or spirit of the

curriculum. While independent Lithuanian schools of general education had a 13-year program, the Kremlin has reduced it to eleven grades (to ten grades since 1964), to fit the Soviet pattern. Latin, social studies, philosophy, local history and geography, and religion have been totally eliminated. The number of class hours in general history, geography, physical education, music, and handicrafts has been sharply reduced. The Russian language has been made obligatory from the second to the eleventh grade. Lithuanian history and geography have been absorbed into those of the U.S.S.R. Lithuanian language, literature, history and geography textbooks have been re-edited according to the propaganda demands of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R.; other textbooks have been translated verbatim from the Russian. Khrushchev's school reform, combining learning with production, is being applied to the letter in Lithuania's schools. Lithuania's school budget is determined by Moscow.

The number of students in specialized secondary schools and in some schools of higher learning has considerably increased. Some reasons for this increase: (1) an extraordinary growth of bureaucracy; (2) purges of specialists, especially teachers from independent Lithuania; (3) the training of specialists, not only for Lithuania's needs, but also for those of the U.S.S.R.; and (4) large import of Russian students.

The general aim of all schools in Soviet-occupied Lithuania is to educate professionals and Communist activists, submissive and unconditionally loyal to the Soviet Communist party of the U.S.S.R., contemptuous toward religion, and fully approving of the leading and decisive Russian role in Lithuanian affairs.

5. Lithuanian Culture under Soviet Rule

Every intellectual and artistic activity in Soviet-occupied Lithuania is strictly controlled by the Party and is made to further Communist goals. Moreover, Lithuanian artists and intellectuals are compelled to glorify Russian history and culture and even to praise the enslavement of their own country. The Russification of the Lithuanian book market under Khrushchev and Kosygin is as depressing as it was under the Stalin era.

No efforts are spared to keep Lithuanians isolated from the outside world and to prevent them from acquiring knowledge of the contemporary cultural achievements of the non-Communist nations. Even publications from such Communist-ruled countries as Poland are banned or censored. The work of not a single major modern French playwright has been performed in Lithuania since the Soviet occupation. In painting and sculpture, the imitation of the contemporary Russian realistic style, stilted and of highly questionable artistic

value, is considered a sign of true "proletarian internationalism." "Socialist realism"—Communist didacticism in poster style—is the official aesthetic dogma.

The results of this twofold Communist and Russian chauvinist pressure have been disastrous. While from 1946 to 1950 Lithuanian exiles published 289 titles (fiction, poetry, drama), only 191 new titles appeared in the occupied country. Even worse than the decline in numbers has been the uniformity and the mandatory shallowness of the literary output. Within the past 20 years there have been no innovations in Lithuanian painting, sculpture, and the graphic arts. Only in music, which is more difficult to subject to political controls, has there been more creative achievement. But even the composers write in the censor's and the policeman's shadow. The premiere of a new Lithuanian opera *Sukilėliai* (The Rebels), for instance, was cancelled upon Moscow's orders, since the libretto presented tsarist (!) Russians in an unfavorable light.

Yet the Party has not been able to extinguish the creative spirit in Lithuania. A new generation of talented writers show an effort to transcend official restrictions and have created works of interest. Communist officials are constantly accusing Lithuanian writers of "tendentiously deviating from the principles outlined by the Communist Party and consciously ignoring the essence of Party-mindedness... in Soviet art." (*Komjaunimo Tiesa*, April 3, 1963). It is notable that the revolt against "Socialist realism" and Russian chauvinism is most pronounced among young authors, who have grown up and matured under the Communist system.

6. The Struggle against Religion

Since Lithuania is predominantly Roman Catholic, the main anti-religious campaigns are directed against the Roman Catholic Church. The concordat between Lithuania and the Vatican was abrogated on June 25, 1940. All religious private schools, kindergartens, orphanages, hospitals, and charity institutions were confiscated; all monasteries were closed. Religious periodicals (with a circulation of 7,000,000) were suppressed.

Since the beginning of the Soviet occupation, 180 priests have been deported to Siberian labor camps. Seventy-eight priests were murdered. Archbishop M. Reinys died in prison, Bishop V. Borisevicius was executed, Bishops T. Matulionis and P. Ramanauskas have been deported. When the Archbishop of Vilnius and three other Lithuanian bishops were arrested by the N.K.V.D. in 1946, only one bishop remained in office for all Lithuania. Two new bishops were ordained in 1955, but in 1961 one of them was arrested and expelled from his diocese. Two Lithuanian bishops returned from exile in

Siberia in 1956; they were not permitted to carry out their pastoral duties. In 1963, a single bishop remained in office for all of Lithuania.

Of 1,022 churches in 1939, only about 500 remained open in 1963. In 1940, Lithuania counted 1,439 Roman Catholic priests—only some 800 were active in 1963. The Communist regime has closed the former Graduate School and two seminaries for priests; enrollment to the remaining single seminary is limited to 50 students.

Churches in Soviet-occupied Lithuania are considered a state property; the faithful merely rent them at exorbitant rates. Failure to pay results in a confiscation of the church.

During the postwar period the regime has issued only one permit to build a church—in Klaipeda. As soon as it was completed, with funds donated by the faithful, its rector and his assistant were arrested and sentenced, in 1961, to eight and four years of prison, respectively, for allegedly illegal purchases of building materials. The church, after the demolition of its tower, was converted into a music hall. In 1962, the Church of Saint Casimir, Patron Saint of Lithuania, in Vilnius, was converted into a Museum of Atheism.

The clergy and religion are exposed to endless defamatory attacks by all government-controlled communications media. Teaching religion to children is strictly forbidden, and anyone doing so risks up to four years of imprisonment. Christmas, Easter, and Withsunday have been replaced by corresponding Communist holidays, such as "Father Frost Day," the "Day of Birds," and the "Day of Animal Husbandry." The regime is making every effort, although unsuccessfully as yet, to replace religious christenings, confirmations, weddings, and funerals by Communist rites.

7. "Liberalization" under Khrushchev

Some political commentators in the West credit Khrushchev with having radically reformed Stalin's oppressive rule and having set the Soviet Union on a swift course of "liberalization." Developments in Lithuania do not support this optimistic theory. Although after Stalin's death the worst excesses of Communist terror were curbed, in some areas Russian imperialism and chauvinism have become more intense. It was under Khrushchev's rule, for instance, that the new Party program of 1961 proclaimed that "boundaries between the constituent republics of the U.S.S.R. are increasingly losing their former significance;" that "full-scale Communist construction marks a new stage in the development of national relations within the U.S.S.R., until a complete national unity is achieved"; and that "the Russian language has, in effect, become the common medium of intercourse and cooperation between all the peoples of the U.S.S.R."

Following are a few additional comparisons of conditions:

Under Stalin

and

Under Khrushchev

The language of a "Soviet republic" was compulsory in the schools on its territory.

"Parents have the right to decide what language school their children shall attend." Russians in Lithuania may now disregard the Lithuanian language, while Lithuanians are pressured to choose Russian.

Lithuanian was the official language in Lithuanian courts.

Russian has been made another official language in Lithuanian courts.

Political, economic, and cultural institutions existed both at the all-Union and "republic" levels.

The jurisdiction of the all-Union organizations has been strengthened. The "national" organizations are being gradually submerged within larger units, such as the northwestern region of the U.S.S.R., embracing the area from Leningrad in the R.S.F.S.R. to Kaliningrad (Königsberg) in East Prussia.

The death penalty was abolished for a few years after World War II.

The death penalty has been broadened to include economic offences, illegal trade in foreign currency, offences by inmates of correctional labor camps, etc.

Mass deportations and biological extermination of the Lithuanian people.

More intensive and systematic cultural genocide.

VI. THE FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

1. Resistance in 1940-1941

LITHUANIAN RESISTANCE against the Soviet suppression of Lithuania's independence began on the first day of the Soviet invasion. The President of the Republic left Lithuanian territory on June 15, 1940, to maintain the struggle for the restoration of Lithuania's independence beyond its borders. All diplomatic representatives of independent Lithuania strongly and unanimously condemned the Soviet aggression. The first conspicuous manifestation of popular resistance against Soviet rule was the boycotting of the "elections" to the "People's Diet." The next step in the crystallization of popular resistance was the founding of several underground resistance organizations. In his memorandum on "counter-revolutionary activities" the Commissar of the Interior of Soviet-occupied Lithuania stated on April 14, 1941:

From the moment of the establishment of Soviet rule in Lithuania, the counter-revolutionary nationalist element developed an active anti-Soviet movement.

As already mentioned, the result of the Lithuanian resistance in 1940-1941 was a short interval of national freedom and the establishment of a provisional Lithuanian Government in 1941.

2. Guerilla Warfare in 1944-1952

The second Soviet occupation in 1944 found Lithuania better prepared, morally and materially, to resist Soviet colonialism than during the first in 1940. Powerful factors, both rational and emotional, militated for a strong stand against the Soviets. The most important of these was the vivid memory of the first Soviet occupation of

1940-41. Mass arrests, deportations, terror, and murder were returning with the Soviet tanks.

Until the summer of 1945, the best-organized armed resistance units had been operating in northern Lithuania. In 1947 all groups of Lithuanian freedom fighters had been merged within the Lithuanian Freedom Army (LFA). The ranks of the Lithuanian freedom fighters were composed of people from all walks of life: workers, farmers, employees, students, and professional people. The principles of the LFA Constitution became their code of conduct:

The ranks of the freedom fighters are open to Lithuanian men and women, irrespective of age, who have high moral standards, courage and determination; who have never committed any acts against the Lithuanian nation; and who are totally devoted to the liberation of Lithuania... In his action, the freedom fighter is always guided by the good of Lithuania, disregarding any personal advantage or profit.

The weapons of the LFA were both of Soviet and German manufacture. Before the forcible collectivization, LFA units subsisted on voluntary food donations from the farming population. Women played a unique role in liaison work. The underground press, the nervous system of the LFA, carried its views and orders to the population. LFA armed resistance was mainly directed against:

(1) the destruction of Lithuania's sovereignty, the political rape of the Lithuanian population, the falsification of the Lithuanian people's will by mock elections, and the illegal conscription of Lithuanians into the Soviet army;

(2) the genocide of the Lithuanian nation: mass deportations,* mass arrests, mass importation of Russian colonists;

(3) the economic pauperization and moral degradation of the Lithuanian people: expropriation of farmers, exploitation of workers, rapine and violation by the N.K.V.D.; moonshining, alcoholism, and loosening of morals.

The activity of the LFA was successful to such a degree that for several years Soviet colonialism in Lithuania was checkmated.

Gradually, however, severe losses in dead and wounded, as well as dwindling supplies of light arms and ammunition, began to limit guerilla operations. Since forced collectivization was pauperizing the farmers to an unimaginable degree, the provisioning of the LFA

* Mass deportations from Soviet-occupied Lithuania were carried out on June 14-20, 1941; July-September, 1945; February 18, 1946; July-December, 1947; May 22, 1948; March 24-29, 1949; June, 1949; March, 1950. About 350,000 people were deported to remote regions of the U.S.S.R., where many perished under the inhuman conditions of slave labor camps, Arctic cold, disease, and starvation.

with food and shelter grew increasingly more difficult. Also, the failure of the free world to support the LFA, either materially or morally, provided grist for the N.K.V.D. propaganda mills. Under such conditions a disengagement from armed hostilities against the U.S.S.R. became inevitable for the LFA. The "demobilization" was carried out slowly, and was concluded in 1952.

From 1945 to 1952, the Soviet N.K.V.D. lost some 80,000 men in its war against the LFA. About 4,000 communist activists were also killed. The losses of the LFA amounted to more than 30,000 freedom fighters, including 90 per cent of the LFA's cadres.

The cessation of armed guerilla warfare did not spell the end of Lithuanian resistance against Soviet domination. On the contrary, resistance by peaceful means gained a new impetus. A new generation of Lithuanians now stands in the forefront of the struggle against Moscow's efforts to destroy the Lithuanian national identity.

3. Lithuanians Abroad and the Struggle for Freedom

Almost 1,000,000 Lithuanian immigrants and their descendants were living in the United States before World War II. Numerous communities of Lithuanians, some numbering 50,000, were living scattered in Great Britain, Canada, and the countries of South America. Most of them had their own cultural and religious organizations, as well as newspapers.

Lithuanians abroad reacted most strongly against the Soviet invasion of their native land. Special committees for Lithuania's liberation were organized in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, and the United States. Particularly effective were the activities of the American Lithuanian Council in Chicago.

Some 65,000 Lithuanians fled to the West before the returning Red Army in 1944. These exiles reinvigorated the activities of the old Lithuanian communities abroad. Lithuanian diplomatic and consular missions, organizations of Lithuanian exiles, and committees of Lithuanians who have become citizens of other states, remain active for the liberation of Soviet-occupied Lithuania.

At present Lithuania is deprived of its right to self-determination, and her genuine political institutions have been replaced by alien ones. Lithuania's culture is being distorted, and its economy is made to serve Russia's needs. Lithuanians have been deprived of all basic human rights and freedoms. Nevertheless, no dictatorship in the world, however brutal and ruthless, can change the course of history or stop the progress of mankind toward individual freedom and national self-determination. In this certitude lies the best hope and guarantee for the restoration of Lithuania's independence.

MEMORANDA

NATIONAL FLAG

Horizontal stripes of yellow, green, and red.

STATE EMBLEM

Vytis, a mounted knight in white on a field of red.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

February 16—Day of the Restoration of Independence.
September 8—Day of Lithuanian Kingdom.

CHRONOLOGY

1251: Establishment of the Lithuanian Kingdom.
1569-1795: Lithuanian-Polish Commonwealth.
1795-1915: Lithuania under Russian rule.
1915-1918: Lithuania under German occupation.
1918: Restoration of Lithuania's Independence.
1920: Elections to the Constituent Assembly (May 15) and Peace Treaty with Soviet Russia (July 12).
1926: Non-Aggression Pact with the U.S.S.R. (September 28).
1939: Secret Soviet-Nazi agreements against Lithuania (August 23 and September 28).
1940: Soviet invasion of Lithuania (June 15) and forcible incorporation into the U.S.S.R. (August 3).
1941: First mass deportations (June 14-20), armed revolt against Soviet occupation (June 22), and restoration of the Lithuanian Government (June 23).
1941-1944: Lithuania under German occupation.
1944: Second Soviet occupation of Lithuania.
1944-1952: Lithuanian guerilla warfare against the Soviets.

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